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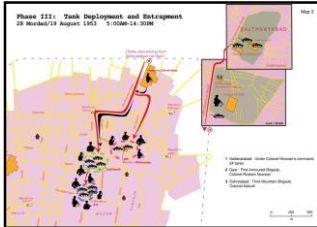
Middle Eastern Oil: A look at how the United States used Iran to gain oil exploits during the Cold War 1953-1979

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Introduction

The Iranian Coup of 1953 was a joint operation by the United States and the United Kingdom to overthrow elected Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadeq. The US object was to reinstall the power of the pro-western leadership of Reza Shah to guarantee US access to Iranian oil concessions. Mossadeq was suspected to ally with the Russians once Iranian oil was nationalized from US and other foreign oil companies. The documentation written by CIA planner Dr. Donald N Wilber, shows that the United States used Iran in order to gain access to oil and overcome Russian expansion during the Cold War.



Pictured here is the movement and incorporation of tanks by Pro Shah forces in order to entrap the Prime Minister and overpower his forces, August 19th, 1953



Dr. Donald N Wilber, lead CIA planner and writer of the Iranian Coup of 1953

The Source

"Overthrow of Premier Mossadeq of Iran November 1952-1953", written by Dr. Wilber in March of 1954 to take record of the involvement and planning done by the United States in the 1953 Iranian Coup. The paper is written after the events of the coup, it is a detailed explanation of the steps taken by the United States and the United Kingdom to remove Mossadeq from power. Mossadeq wanted to nationalize the oil from foreign involvement, creating a threat to US investments in Iranian oil. Mossadeq's government had ties to the Iranian communist party, leading the US to fear greater ties to the USSR. This previously classified source was later on published to the public by the New York Times in April 2000, prior to the publication the US denied any involvement in the coup.

"Specifically, the aim was to bring to power a government which would reach an equitable oil settlement, enabling Iran to become economically sound and financially solvent, and which would vigorously prosecute the dangerously strong Communist Party."

Dr. Wilber's recording of the coup is very monumental to the study of Iranian and US foreign relations because of the presented strong US reaction to the idea of oil nationalization presented by Prime Minister Mossadeq. The motive given to overthrow the elected premier was to cut Iran's growing ties to Russia before communism became dangerous to the rest of the Middle East and the United States. The importance of oil was established shortly after the events of the coup with the establishment of oil concessions between Iran and the west. The Shah was given conditions from the US in order to reinstate his monarchy, the quick establishment of oil concessions was one of the first terms appearing in Dr. Wilber's documentation of the Coup. The United States pursued their own interest and installed the pro-western Shah who would guarantee oil exploitation to the US.

Conclusions

The United States prioritized their own interests in oil to intervene in Iran with the Coup of 1953 to remove the communist threat to US oil investments. Dr. Wilber's paper fit within my thesis because of the breakdown of US intention and steps taken during the 1953 coup. Dr. Wilber's record of the United State's involvement in the Iranian coup is significant to the larger historiography because it is a key event when looking at the Iranian-US relationship. The Iranian coup of 1953 is the beginning of a turbulent relationship with the United States. Analysis of the coup and the documentation provided by Dr. Wilber gives the foundation to understanding the events that follow, such as the 1979 revolution, the Iranian hostage crisis, and the modern day relationship between the United States and Iran.

Literature Cited

1. Byrne, Malcom. "CIA Confirms Role in 1953 Iran Coup." The National Security Archive, 2013. https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB435/#_ftn1.
2. Wilbur, Donald N. "Overthrow of Premier Mossadeq of Iran: November 1952 - August 1953." CIA, March 1954.